Fellowship

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.O.R. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HITS U.S. BAN ON CUBA "PEACE TEAM"

The Executive Committee of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, meeting New York City on March 21 "vigorously protested" the recent decision of the ate Department refusing permission to a Fellowship-sponsored "peace team" visit Cuba. "We regret," the Committee said, "that an attempt by a group of spected leaders in church, academic and peace circles to search for means of establishing peaceful relations between the two governments, should be con-

dered as not 'in the best interests of e United States.' " At the same time, e Executive Committee stressed the llowship's continuing efforts "in ery way open to it" to find means of aling the dispute between the two untries and urged the support "of r fellow Americans" particularly ose "whose religious faith is inex-icably entangled with admonitions to turn good for evil."

On March 9, three Fellowship repre-ntatives, including Alfred Hassler, xecutive Secretary of the FOR, Mrs. nnalee Stewart, Legislative Secretary the Women's International League r Peace and Freedom and William tuart Nelson, Dean of Howard Uni-ersity, met for extended discussions ith State Department officials con-erning the proposed Cuba visit. The ree explained the purpose of the peace team," which was to determine r itself the truth of developments in uba and to discuss with both govern-ental and private persons possibilities r reducing tension and increasing nderstanding between the two coun-ries. However, State Department of-icials, including members of the Se-urity and Consular Affairs Division nd the Mexican-Caribbean Depart-ent, although interested and recep-ive to the idea, told the group that such team could not go to Cuba because 'our Government cannot afford them rotection there." The three replied y denying any request for such pro-ection and pointed out that they did not know of a single instance in which American visitors to Cuba, other than newspapermen and counter-revolution-aries, have been molested there. They also stressed that such visitors report their feeling that a solitary stranger in Havana may be safer than on the streets of many an American city.

> ***"...So Easily Severed"***
>
> *"We oppose the whole policy of restricting travel, as we regret our government's action in severing diplomatic relations with Cuba. Historically such acts have rarely served other than to exacerbate the situations they were meant to improve, and must frequently be followed by painful and tedious efforts eventually to re-establish, in the interests of peace and understanding, the communications so easily severed."*
>
> *from the statement on Cuba by the FOR Executive Committee.*

The team had planned to go to Cuba by plane on Jan. 20, but the trip had to be canceled when the State Department on Jan. 19 officially forbade travel by American citizens to Cuba except in such instances where such travel would be "in the best interests of the United States." This stipulation has been narrowly interpreted to mean only journalists and business men and cases of personal or family emergency.

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F.O.R. Executive Committee *(cont'd)*

A statement protesting the State Department decision, describing the FOR position on Cuba and some details of the meeting with State Department officials was issued by the FOR Executive Committee following its March meeting.

Pacifists Protest Missile Subs in U.S., Scotland

Two pacifists were arrested in Portsmouth, N.H., on Mar. 11 following an unsuccessful attempt to board the new Polaris missile-firing submarine *Abraham Lincoln*, stationed there. The men, both members of the Committee for Nonviolent Action which is protesting the manufacture of Polaris submarines, paddled a canoe up the Pistcataqua river as commissioning ceremonies for the craft began. Coast Guard boats pursued them and twice put hooks onto the canoe. However, the pacifists escaped and headed for a fuel barge 200 feet from the submarine. When they scrambled aboard the barge they were seized by shipyard authorities. The men, Ed Guerard of New York and Arthur Harvey of Raymond, N.H., were fingerprinted but were later released without charges.

In Holy Loch, Scotland on Mar. 8, four British pacifists in canoes and a rowboat protested the arrival of the U.S. nuclear submarine *Patrick Henry* but were pursued by British launches. One demonstrator, whose canoe sank in the chase, was hauled out of the water and arrested.

Easter Demonstrations Stress Total Disarmament

Hundreds of demonstrators urgin the abolition of nuclear weapons tes ing and the goal of total disarmamer for all nations are expected to converg on the UN in New York City on April Many of them, members of New Yor and New Jersey SANE, FOR and othe groups, have been participating in a 7 day peace walk through New Jerse towns and cities. Another group, spon sored by the Committee for Nonviolen Action, have held public meetings an vigils and distributed leaflets in th course of a 3-week walk from Kittery, M

Meanwhile, hundreds are participa ing in a witness for peace in front o the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., o April 1. The demonstration, sponsore by the "Witness for Peace" Committe headed by FOR member and Fort De trick Vigil leader Lawrence Scott, cu minates a 3-day series of vigils held a Fort Detrick, the U.S. biological weap ons research center in Frederick, Md and the Atomic Energy Commission i Germantown, Md.

In Chicago on April 1, a mass peac demonstration is being held in the city' Loop followed by a rally at a local ho tel. Among the participants are mem bers of the Transatlantic Walk fo Peace who arrived in Chicago on Mar 30 after walking 2,000 miles on thei journey to Moscow. Others include lo cal AFSC, FOR, the Student Peac Union and other groups.

Similar demonstrations are under wa in other major cities across the country

In West Germany on April 3, anti nuclear marches will converge on mos major population centers including Ham burg, Braunschweig, Hannover and Bre men. This will be the first such nation wide protest against nuclear weapon since the massive protests of 1958.

In England, thousands have partici pated in the largest Aldermaston demon stration ever staged, to culminate in huge rally at Trafalgar Square on Eas ter Monday. Sponsored by the Campaig for Nuclear Disarmament, the walk an rally included over 1,500 participants from other lands.

NEWS from the peace front

The U.S. Tax Court in Washington, D.C., last month ruled that A.J. Muste, FOR Secretary Emeritus, must pay $1,245 in back taxes plus penalties for his refusal to pay Federal income taxes for the years 1948-53. Muste refused payment on conscientious grounds that much of the tax goes for production of nuclear weapons. In handing down the decision, the judge declared: "There is no doubt as to the sincerity of the petitioner's beliefs, but in our opinion he does not have the right to refuse to comply with the law, even though the policies of the federal government and the manner of its revenue may not accord with the dictates of his conscience or religion."

To emphasize his conviction, Muste had sent the Internal Revenue Service a copy of the Gospels and Thoreau's *Essay on Civil Disobedience.*

* * *

A total of 250 American college and university professors signed a statement last month urging the abolition of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The statement condemned the HUAC for repeatedly undermining "the freedoms essential for national well being" and deplored its "unrelenting harassment of teachers in its 24-year history." Among the signers of the statement were C. Wright Mills, Ashley Montagu, Gordon Allport and others.

The statement was drawn up and publicized by the American Civil Liberties Union.

Earlier, over 400 distinguished Americans signed a similar statement which appeared as an ad in the Feb. 9 issue of *The New York Times.* Among them were Carl Sandburg, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, Eleanor Roosevelt and such FOR members as Martin Luther King Jr., A.J. Muste and others.

* * *

Young men accepted by the Peace Corps will probably be given draft deferment for the length of that duty, according to a statement made by Selective Service Director General Lewis B. Hershey in Washington, D.C., last month. Barring some new military crises, he continued, they will probably be able to get deferments if they remain in the work or undertake study "in the national interest."

* * *

Prime Ministers of the British Commonwealth ended their conference in London last month with a call for new efforts to achieve total world disarmament. They issued a 9-point statement urging "nothing less than the complete abolition of the means of waging war of any kind." Once started, the process of disarmament should continue "without interruption until it is completed," the ministers said, "subject to verification at each stage that all parties are duly carrying out their undertakings."

The U.S. Government still has not committed itself to a policy of seeking total disarmament but clings to the idea of arms "reduction and control."

* * *

The first regularly scheduled FOR radio program was initiated last month by the Pomona College KSPC Radio station in Claremont, Calif. The program, prepared by the FOR audio-visual department at FOR headquarters in Nyack, features weekly discussions on unilateral disarmament, Civil Defense, the sit-ins and other subjects.

* * *

The Protestant Episcopal Church last month urged its members to work for the abolition of the death penalty on the ground that it violates Christian teaching, brutalizes society and fails to deter crime. The message, which condemned the measure for cutting short "the possibility of redemption in this life," was issued at a meeting of the church's National Council in Washington, D. C.

Meanwhile, the Philadelphia Presbytery, representing about 200 United Presbyterian churches, last month called on the state of Pennsylvania to eliminate capital punishment. It also urged the Church to seek "the redemption of

(Continued on next page)

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evil doers; not vengeance nor retribution."

Other religious groups recently demanding an end to the death penalty include the General Convention of the Methodist Church, the Texas Convention of Christian Churches and others.

Pacific Friends Push Alternative Tax Proposal

A proposed bill offering an alternative to persons conscientiously opposed to the use of income taxes for military purposes is being circulated by the Pacific Yearly Meeting of Friends. According to the bill, individuals "with sincere convictions against military preparations" may designate their tax to a special Civilian Income Tax Fund. This fund would go annually to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). The individuals in question would also pay an additional 5% over and above their normally computed tax as a proof of their sincerity.

Single copies of the proposed bill may be obtained free of charge from FOR member Franklin Zahn, 836 S. Hamilton Blvd., Pomona, Calif.

LIT NOTES

Kirkridge Occasions 1961, listing retreats to be given from April through November, is available free from Kirkridge, Bangor, Pa. Subjects of the 2-day retreats range from "Dance and Christian Worship" (John Oliver Nelson) to slum churches (George W. Webber), "Commitment in Depth" (N. Gordon Crosby) and "Church, Poverty and Communism" (G. Parker Rossman). The Kirkridge retreat center, in the Appalachians, is modeled after the Iona Community of Scotland and includes nonviolence in its Discipline; a copy of which is available from the same address.

* * *

Now available: a revised edition of the *Bibliography on War, Pacifism, Nonviolence and Related Studies,* containing a list of new titles and handy author index. Price: 25¢. Order from Fellowship Publications, Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. The index is available free on request to those already owning copies of the *Bibliography.*

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 6-8. FOR National Council Meetings at FOR national headquarters in Nyack, N. Y.

April 28-29. FOR Midwest Annual Conference at the Elmhurst Methodist Church, 232 S. York St., Elmhurst, Ill. For information write: Alfred Ames, 734 Noyes St., Evanston, Ill.

May 25. New York FOR dinner at Christ Church (Methodist), 530 Park Ave., N.Y. For reservations write: A.J. Muste, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y.

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